

i'm not okay and it's not alright by themundaneweirdo

Series: hold my breath (and let it bury me) [4]

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Summary:

He's such a monster.

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Author's Note:

Okay, so after watching *The Shape of Water*, and having a nice hot shower, I wrote nothing but hurt. So break out your tissues and be gentle with me.

This is what ya'll wanted.

Feel free to join my discord:
<https://discord.gg/nvw7Vnh>

Billy woke up at sunrise on a Sunday.

The night before, he'd gotten the best sleep he's ever had in a while, with Max curled in on her side, arms around her belly. The blonde had one of his own around her midsection, the warm flesh now hard with the impending due date. The baby was so close to being due, it worried him a little how calm Max had been through it all. She felt the Braxton Hicks, but she didn't freight, unlike Billy who'd nearly had a panic attack when her flesh suddenly hardened under his palm.

He'd been counting down the days until Max would be driven to the hospital to be cut open, and just the thought of it made Billy shiver. He understood on the medical part, she was young and her body really wasn't ready to become pregnant, let alone give birth naturally. A c-section was the best option when it came to safety for not only Max, but for the baby. Dr. Burnes had said the infant could be stuck in the birth canal, or become breech, and Billy didn't want that for his child. Not to mention it would hurt Max, too.

But the other part of him, the one that had the overwhelming urge to protect Max and the baby, also saw where the procedure could go wrong. The redhead was small, her body short and thin without the belly, so he worried she would bleed out while the doctors were extracting the baby. Billy didn't think he could take the pain of losing Max like that, suddenly and without warning. And then he'd be left with the baby, motherless and virtually fatherless because Susan and Neil could never know about the truth.

Billy knew it was what's best for both the people at risk, Max and baby, and he had to trust that to get her through the birth, whenever it happened, because he couldn't be weak when Max needed him. He might not be allowed in the room, but he'd promised to be there for her, even if he'd have to sit in the hallway and listen as the procedure went on without him, just praying that everything goes right even if he didn't deserve it.

He really didn't deserve it, if he'd been honest. If he'd been more civil about nine months ago, and more sober, he probably wouldn't have been in bed with his sister, arm around her belly, their child resting there, like it had known it was about to be evicted from its safe cocoon. If he'd been more like a brother, like a guardian instead of a lover, he would've been like every other high school senior in Hawkins, air headed with no care in the world. Billy didn't deserve the happiness that Max's belly brought him knowing he did that, but the guilt, well, that he deserved.

Billy didn't think he was any better than Neil, if not worse, when he realized that his stupid, drunk actions would have a life changing effect on himself and Max. More so the redhead, because while the outside world would always view him as an Uncle, she would always be an underage mother, reckless teen, a stupid girl. Billy didn't want that for her. He wanted her to thrive and be successful, to become a woman and be independent, not to be a young girl that had bit off more than she could chew. He wanted more from and for her, he expected more from her, and he felt like he'd tied her down.

But, Max didn't like that kind of thinking. She had always said she wanted him, she wanted his physical love, and while she was too young for sex in his opinion, she insisted she knew what she was doing. Max didn't plan to get pregnant, she had told him, but she welcomed it because it was a part of Billy, and therefor the baby was bound to be beautiful and loved. He wished he could've agreed, but what child wants to grow up to be told their uncle was their father? Billy couldn't imagine how that would go over.

Max shifted on the bed, groaning as she moved until she was on her back and yawned, stretching her arms and legs. Billy smiled at her as her eyes opened and she blinked lazily, mirroring his smile. He thought she looked beautiful like that, messy, silky hair and her skin

glowing in the morning sunlight. Her skin had been like that since her second trimester, smooth and fresh like she'd just stepped out of the shower. She was radiant and gorgeous, something she'd always been, but more so with her pregnancy.

The redhead lifted her hand and cupped Billy's chin, bringing him toward her until she could brush her lips on his. He'd been allowing Max to kiss him whenever she liked because he had no reason to deny her, especially in the privacy of his bedroom, but he didn't mind the affection. She was almost fourteen, Max knew how kissing worked, and she knew she really liked it when she could do it with Billy.

She didn't pull away until she needed air, but as she let go of him, she kept her thumb on his lower lip, stroking over it as she sighed and leaned back into the pillows.

"Today's the day, huh?," she asked, her voice low and quiet.

Billy nodded, moving so he was propped up on his hand, elbow pressed into the bed. He didn't know if he wanted it to be time, though, because he couldn't wait to meet his baby, but he wasn't anticipating Max's c-section. He couldn't stomach the image.

"Are you nervous?"

She nodded, rubbing a hand over her belly. "A little, but I'm excited, too. I'll finally get to prove to you that it's a girl."

Billy chuckled, his free hand going to her belly as well, the bed sheet falling to reveal his pj pants waist. He admired Max's good nature, how humbled she seemed about it, knowing her baby would be in her arms soon. The image of the redhead laying in a hospital bed, their perfect little angel wrapped in a cozy blanket, brought warmth to his chest.

"If it's not a girl after all that Hell you've put me through with that damn nursery," he laughed, watching her face turn to a blushing smile. Her freckles stood out, the green in her eyes like a emerald ocean against her supple, flushed skin, a treasure that Billy wasn't sure he was worthy to see. God, he really loved her.

Max's face suddenly went solemn, hauntingly so that it made Billy panic for a split second, the hand on her belly moving to feel for anything out of order. She stopped his wander hand, and forced him to look at her, the green of her eyes clouded with something he couldn't quite put his finger on.

"What if..."

She laced her fingers with his, resting on her stomach. "What if she looks exactly like you? What if mom or Neil notice, and they try to lock you up? Or take Jaclyn, or—"

Billy shakes his head, a few curls from atop his head falling to his forehead. "Don't talk like that, okay? We're gonna be okay. And if she does look like me, we'll figure it out."

"But, Billy, I'm scared," she said, her eyes welling with fearful tears, threatening to spill down her cheeks. The tip of her nose went red, matching the blush growing even darker across her face. Billy hated to see her like that, panicking and falling apart right under his finger tips, but she had a reason. The idea of the baby being born, and obviously taking after Billy, was a all too possible thing. As much as he wanted to claim the baby, he couldn't, but the infants genetics could possibly give it away.

"I know, baby, I know," Billy whispered, leaning down and kissing her forehead. He brushed a few strands of her hair out of her face, cupped her chin and made her look at him. "But, it's going to be okay. I'm right here with you, no matter what."

Max nodded, wiping the tears away before cuddling down in the bed, turning so her weight was on him. He didn't mind, didn't really care in that moment, all he cared about was making her feel safe, feel in control of things even if she wasn't. Max couldn't go into the surgery stressed or upset, Dr. Burnes said that would be the worst thing to happen before hand, and Billy didn't want her to go into the hospital and have a breakdown because she didn't have comfort. He was hoping she'd soak it all up right then, and maybe she did, but he had no way of knowing.

They stayed like that for a while, just breathing each other in,

listening to one another's hearts, praying that everything would be okay, until Billy's alarm clock read 8 am. It was time to go, so the two untangled and left the bed, putting on brave faces, but still unprepared to face the world.

The ride to the hospital was tense. Neil's hands were white knuckled on the steering wheel as he drove to the next town over, unnoticed by Susan as she was digging in the bag that she'd kept ready for almost a week. It seemed she was more excited about the baby than anyone, even Max. A smile graced her face nearly the while way, glancing back at Max and Billy in the back seat occasionally when the younger redhead inhaled or exhaled deeply. There was a twinkle in her eyes, an excited haze hovering over her while a cloud of tension hung around the other occupants of the car.

Neil kept looking in the rear view mirror, licking his lips when his eyes raked over Max's body. She didn't seem to notice, looking out the window of the car as the world passed by, unaware of the evil gaze upon her. But, Billy saw it. He saw how his father's eyes darkened when Max shifted in her seat, the seat belt keeping her shirt in one place as a small sliver a milk-engorged breast came into view over her neck line, just enough to show her bra. She fixed it before asking Susan for the normal sized blanket from her over night bag, and wrapped herself in it.

A corner of the blanket fell over Billy's hand on the seat of the car, and Max's nimble fingers laced with his under the cover, safe and away from anyone's prying eyes. It was the only touch they would be allowed for a while since Billy won't be in the room, and he probably won't be to hold the baby for two long after it's born, otherwise it would look suspicious. He really didn't want Susan or Neil to look at him while he held his child, and then suddenly, they would see the resemblance. That would be a nightmare.

The family pulled into a gas station, just about twenty minutes from the hospital, and Neil got out to pay and pump before Susan decided she wanted something from inside the store, and left Max and Billy alone in the car.

"I can't believe he's still looking at me," the redhead said, watching her mom enter the store. "And, then my boob fell out."

Billy chuckled at her as blushed at her mishap, as if it was the most normal nonchalant thing she could've said to him. She giggled despite herself, covering her mouth with her hand and smiling bright behind it. Billy loved that smile, wished he could've seen it while she was flushed furiously.

"It's okay, I won't let him bother you," he said once their quiet laughter died down, Neil coming back out the store to pump the gas, Susan hot on his heels. She had a paper bag in her hands, indicating she'd probably bought drinks for everyone. The older redhead steps into the car and sighs, begins to dig around in the bag as Neil pumps the gas.

"Glad to have a man protecting my boobs," Max whispered while the crinkling of the bag drowned her out, a smile on her face as Billy blushed.

"Hm?," Susan asked, glancing back at her.

"I didn't say anything."

The hospital was bright and alive, doctors bolstering and nurses checking in patients. There were people in the waiting room, all of different ages and races, waiting on news on their loved ones. Billy would be there soon, sitting with Neil as they wait for the doctor to alert them of the baby's arrival. Or, if anything went wrong, to come and tell them of Max had died. God, he hoped that didn't happen.

Dr. Burnes met them at the door and had Max wheeled off almost immediately, and before long, Billy found himself beside her bed. She was prepped and ready for her procedure, in a blue hospital gown and a hair cap on her head, but a smile graced her face. She couldn't wait to have her baby, Billy could tell, she was radiating nerves and excitement. Her hands kept going over her belly, like she was trying to remember the feel of having the little one inside of her, moving and kicking. It made Billy think maybe she didn't want any more kids in the future since she was having her first so young. Maybe not, he thought.

"Okay, Mr. Hargrove, Billy, I suggest you say your goodbyes before we wheel her in," Dr. Burnes told them, helping Susan get into her

own blue gown.

Neil didn't even look at her before exiting the room, ignoring the odd stare from Susan. Billy didn't care what his dad did as long as he wasn't hurting Max or the baby. Neil was a fucked up individual, he was sick and had the worst mind Billy had ever seen. But, if he kept his distance, and didn't come close to Billy's two important people, then the blonde couldn't do anything. It was a matter of perspective, because Susan thought Neil was good, but Billy and Max knew the truth.

Billy leaned over the bed and hugged the redhead, lingering as she whispered in his ear.

"I really wish I could kiss you right now," she said lowly, just loud enough for him to hear. He patted her belly lightly as he drew away, letting her know he felt the same. He wished he could be in the room with her, hold her hand while they cut out the baby, to hear his child's cries and watch the nurses clean it. Her, clean her. Billy had to remember that, Max was damn sure it was a girl.

"Take care of my sister, doc," he said before leaving the room, watching from the glass window as they wheeled Max back, Susan walking along beside the bed.

He sat in the hallway with Neil, the tension now thicker than it was in the car. And Billy didn't know why. He figured he could sit with his father for a little while as the surgery went on, maybe even talk to him like civilized people. Neil couldn't hit him in the hospital hallway unless he wanted to be arrested, which Billy would take the hit if it meant the older man going away. But not in that moment, because he was stressing over Max and the baby.

The time ticked by, slow and heavy on Billy's shoulders, just waiting for Dr. Burnes to come running through those doors. He thought about what Max might've been feeling in that exact moment; was she just now being cut, or was she feeling the tug of the baby being removed from her body? Was she crying, was she needing Billy to be right there with her? They had broke her water just before they wheeled her back, so it was possible that she wasn't ready to be cut open.

He let his mind wander, and the next time he checked his wrist watch, she'd been back in the room about an hour. He was about to stand to stretch his legs when Neil started to talk.

"You excited, son?"

Billy glanced at Neil out the corner of his eye. His father's face was calm, almost scarily so, and his leg was crossed over the other. Casual, like he wasn't being bothered by anything, which is abnormal for him. Usually, the mere presence of Billy is more than enough to irritate him. Why was it so scary for him to be clam?

"I guess," the blonde replied. "I'm about to be an Uncle."

Neil huffed, dragging his hand over his mustache. Something about it worried Billy, like it was a warning sign. He only did that when he was about to beat the shit out of him, or when he was about to yell in his face. But, he wouldn't do that in the middle of the hospital, would he?

"You two must think I'm stupid or something," Neil chuckled, shaking his head.

Billy could feel his palms start to sweat. No, there's no way he could've known the baby was his sons. It's not possible, he and Max have kept it quiet from the beginning. Billy swallowed. "What are you--"

"I know the baby is yours, I'm not some retard."

"What--"

Neil turned suddenly, snatching Billy's shirt in his hands and pulled so his nose brushed the blondes. He breathed heavy out his nose, his shoulders heaving with every breath he was taking, the veins in his neck were popping out. Billy had seen Neil mad before, even hateful, but he was murderous in that second. His eyes were filled with unfiltered rage, hands shaking badly with how tight he was holding Billy's shirt. His knuckles were white and a bead of sweat fell down his forehead. Fuck, Billy had never been so scared.

"I hear you and her talking about how much of a monster I am, how

sick I must be to be looking at my own step-daughter like some pedophile. But guess what?"

Billy felt the tears well in his eyes, out of pure fear of his father. Neil shakes his son, watching as the blondes tears spill and run down his face.

Neil grins, sick and twisted. "I might look at her, want to bend her over and use that little body of hers. Hell, I might've only married Susan just to get close to Max, but I never touched her, and I never violated her."

The older man lets go of Billy's shirt with one hand, the same hand coming up to grab the blondes jaw, and forced him to look Neil dead in the eyes. Billy couldn't look away, couldn't even speak or make a sound, all he could do is cry and listen as Neil made his point crystal clear.

"But you? Oh boy, did you mess up. You hear me, Billy? You raped her," Neil spat. "As far as I'm concerned, the only pedophile I see is you."

Neil let go of him and threw him back into the chair before standing, digging the car keys out of his pocket, and began his descent down the hallway. He walked away from his son without a care in the world, his head high as if he'd just been crowned king, and his shoulders pulled back proudly, although Billy didn't know what he could've been proud about. Neil's son was a pedophile, a rapist, a cradle robber.

Billy collapsed back into the seat once his father was out of sight, ugly crying, loud and echoing in the hallway. He didn't care if anyone heard him, or if someone saw him, because he'd just been exposed, the band aid ripped off the wound that he'd had been so desperately trying to heal. Why was he so stupid? He's a monster, a child molester, he took advantage of his sister, his thirteen year old sister who didn't know any better. God, Billy took everything from her, and there she was, in a hospital room, delivering a baby that she probably didn't want.

What has he done? What has Billy done to Max? He tore her

innocence from between her legs, stretched her around his girth, and let her scream, claw at his arms, his shoulders, but he didn't stop. He should've stopped. For all he knew, he'd been delusional up until that point. Maybe Max's smiles were a trick of his mind, the the safety she said she felt when she was in his arms, the happiness she radiated, it could've all been fake. Her good morning kisses, gentle and soft, could've been tense and forced in reality, her willingness to let him touch her stomach could've been fear of him using her again.

How could he do that to her? How could anyone do that to her? Max, she was beautiful, wonderful, and worth more than the gold in the world, more than the diamonds, and more than life itself. Anyone could've been blessed by the hands of God to be with her, to hold her and kiss her, to let her happiness radiate in a golden halo, to be allowed to call her theirs. She deserved so much more than what she got, more than what Billy did to her, what he's left her as. He was a monster, he was Satan himself, Billy was the most vile creature on the planet and he ripped her life, her childhood, right from under her within ten minutes of being inside her.

Billy wanted to die, he wanted to put a barrel in his mouth, a bottle of pills down his throat, whatever he had to do to, he'd do it. Maybe Neil was right all along, maybe he still didn't understand respect and responsibility, because if he did, he would've be at home in Hawkins, probably smoking a cigarette, sipping a half empty beer while he watched Max try her hardest to master a trick on the pavement of the street. He would've been just a step-brother, just Billy, not a uncle, not a father. Not a rapist.

God, why was he such a fuck up? Maybe if his mom hadn't died, and he'd lived with her, Billy would've been in California, going through countless girls and boys, ones his own age, and he'd be happy. He would be free, without a care in the world, he'd be impossibly, hopelessly out of love with the world, and he'd hate himself way more than he did in that moment. Because as much as he hated himself, he'd always love Max.

Billy would never be able to find someone else like her, not even Charlotte could compare after all he'd been through with his step sister. He'd hurt, no, he would kill anyone that hurt her, that spoke to her wrong, that looked at her wrong. He'd strangle them with his

bare hands if it meant keeping Max safe and happy and healthy.

But why hadn't he been able to protect her from himself?

"Billy, are you okay?"

The blonde shakes his head, looking up from the floor and at Max. Her hair is pulled over one bare shoulder, the hospital bed sheet pulled over chest and held in place under her armpits, keeping her decent. She's holding the baby to her chest, the skin-to-skin contact encouraged by the earlier nurse that came to check the redheads vitals.

"Yeah, I'm fine."

She doesn't look convinced, but she doesn't have time to look further into it because the newborn on her chest begins to gurgle, little first curling and uncurling.

Billy's daughter weighs six pounds and seven ounces, and is nineteen inches long. Her eyes are big and blue, like both of her parents, and her curly wisps of hair are a light shade of strawberry blonde. She has the fattest little feet and hands despite being small for a full term baby, and her short legs like to kick out from under herself and look around when Max speaks. The infant already knows her mother's voice, and she looks at the redhead when Max holds her, gentle hands petting over that downy soft baby skin.

She's absolutely perfect in every way to Billy. She's just the right mixture of he and Max, face round and chin soft like her mother, narrow nose and Cupid bow lips like the blonde. He hopes that Susan doesn't see any resemblance in the newborn, but even at only a few hours old, it's very obvious that she does favor Billy. And if her facial features weren't enough, she was born with a birthmark on her left shoulder just like him. How are they going to explain that coincidence?

Neil knows either way, and while Billy is trying not to let it bother him because he's trying to enjoy this moment with his family, he can't shake the feeling that there's something sinister on the horizon for them.

“Do you want to hold her?”

With tears in his eyes, Billy nods, and allows the baby to be passed to him. She blinks drowsily, her small feet curled under herself, hands grappling for purchase at his shirt, and God, he’s never seen something so little, so innocent. She’s so beautiful, her little wisps of hair tickling his fingertips and her skin is so soft, it makes Billy think of dove feathers. He can’t believe that he helped make this little miracle, this angel sent from heaven, but it’s like seeing his own face on a baby, but Max is there, too.

“She’s mine,” he says in the hospital room, just him, Max, and their daughter.

“She’s ours.”

Billy has never felt such power in words, but as he sits back in the chair and holds Jaclyn close to his chest, her little head on his shoulder, he lets it over take him, and he just prays that things will be okay.

Author's Note:

One or two more parts, depending on how I feel.

Comments are my fuel!

What to do you want to happen next? Do you think Neil is going to tell Susan? Let me know because I am truly drained and I don’t know what to post as the 5 out of 6 parts!